

ARE YOU GOING TO THE PATRIOT'S FAIR?

About this time once a year, The Sons of the Republic assemble for a meeting to decide upon the location for the annual National holiday known as "The Patriot's Fair". This holiday runs for approximately two weeks, beginning on the summer solstice, June the 20th, and concluding with fireworks the night of July 4th. The Patriot's Fair is the most formal and elaborate of the holidays celebrated by the Sons of the Republic. Its origins can be traced to a number of different seasonal festivals of the 20th Century.

The first of which is the infamous "Burning Man" festival; began by the Cacophony Society in the 1980s. This festival still happens in the fall season, and has attendance by many thousands of Sons, but retains its own unique traditions. Another origin point has been speculated, that of the Renaissance Festival, a medieval period festival where patrons go to experience entertainment that drew inspiration from the Renaissance era of Europe. It is reasonable to assume that the Patriot's Fair draws similar inspiration from the Renaissance Festival, but instead of a focus on Medieval Europe, the artistic stylings of products and performances are generally leaning towards the colonial era of American History. The last of the foundational origin points is speculated to be the "Rainbow Gathering", an informal association of Anti War Americans who met annually in the National Parks to foster a spirit of National Unity and celebrate the liberties guaranteed by the Founding Fathers of America.

As far as the historians have gathered, the Patriot's Fair originally began as an event within the "Bureau Arts Movement" an outgrowth of the French Beaux Arts Movement, that held semi formal gatherings themed in the French and American Utopian style. The French seem to possess a peculiar and critical role in the foundation of the Patriot's Fair, much like the role they played in the American Founding. Some say that the "Bureau Arts Movement" was an ideological

descendant of the Situationists, who reimagined urbanity and the human condition in the postmodern world. Festivals like Mardi Gras, and the World's Fair, also have similar origins in the French tradition, and seeds of that tradition can also be found ever present throughout the offerings available at the Patriot's Fair.

The Patriot's Fair draws much from the aforementioned festivals and traditions, operating both as a commercial hub for artisans and craftsmen to ply their trade and accumulate material provisions for the summer season. The Patriot's Fair is also an entertainment venue for the general population who do not participate in the production of arts or events, nor as merchants selling their wares at the rapidly assembled commercial kiosks. These attending guests who do not sell or produce wares are titled according to the custom of antiquity as "Patrons". They are generally wealthy members of society who come to the Patriot's Fair to share experiences with the Sons of the Republic, who are to them a separate and strange group, but nonetheless one of sincere fascination and curiosity.

The assembly of the fair in the days preceding the Summer Solstice is rapid and typically begins first with the arrival of the Sons of the Republic who establish a plan for the temporary city grid, establish defensible positions, and ensure that the chosen area does not encroach on the territory of any dangerous beasts who might pose a threat to the patrons. With the security of the territory established, the assignments of temporary plots along a planned road and grid system begins as the merchants arrive at the location. Typically, the merchants arrive a few days in advance depending on the complexity of transporting their wares to the site, and in short order begin assembling their kiosks with the capable and willing assistance of the Sons of the Republic.

The Kiosks are made of varied materials, some are constructed using a framework of iron or copper pipes, covered in canvas and tarps to protect the merchant, his wares, and his clientele from the elements. Others are assembled using a light weight plant based brick which are transported by mules into the interior of the Patriot's Fair. The bricks are designed to fit snugly together so that no mortar

is necessary for the rapid assembly of proper buildings, some reaching as many as 3 or 4 stories. The floors of these buildings are typically lined with wood planks, with iron beams and trusses used to support the upper floors. These buildings serve both as marketplaces, and as residencies for the wealthy patrons who prefer more modern accommodations. Following the conclusion of the fair, blocks which can be reused are loaded back onto the mules and brought to a warehouse where they will wait for the next fair. Broken or damaged bricks can simply be left in the parks to decompose and provide fertilizer to the forests.

The plumbing system is also a feature of sincere fascination. Depending upon the locale, water is harvested on site and boiled in large boilers for sanitation. A rudimentary gravitational plumbing system is developed by placing the boilers on the highest point of elevation surrounding the camp. This allows for all water services to be delivered from the tanks by gravity, significantly reducing electrical load. The steam generated from the sanitation process is transferred into electrical energy that powers the pumps that pull water up to the sanitation boilers from underground wells, or from nearby freshwater sources. Water is then distributed across the temporary encampment through a series of mains. Each outlet is monitored by a Son of the Republic 24 hours a day through the duration of the festival, to ensure that water rations are being managed efficiently. At each outlet, a sanitation center, or “Bath House” as they are called, is constructed. Each Bath House features separated public showers for men and women, along with a system of composting toilets that are especially designed to conceal unpleasant scents from the surrounding area. After interviewing several seasoned veterans of The Patriot’s Fair, I’ve learned that the process of setting up this plumbing system is managed by a couple dozen volunteers and is fully functional in the matter of a day or two.

The electrical system of the camp is designed with a central planning methodology similar to that of the plumbing network. During the first Patriot’s Fair, an unnamed wealthy patron donated a large sum for the first battery trailer to be made available to the general public. This trailer is equipped with a large volume of high capacity batteries that store energy and distribute it to other

electrical hubs throughout the Fair. This trailer is typically located in a clearing where both wind and solar energy can be harvested on a continual basis to charge the batteries. Depending upon the availability of solar or wind power, this system is sometimes supplemented by diesel powered generators. A second trailer carries the solar panels, and portable canvas wind turbines, along with water proof cabling, outlets, and iron pipe protective layers that are utilized to prevent the cables from being damaged during the festival activities. The constraints on electrical energy encourage an Amish like frugality amongst the patrons, and the consciousness of one's energy consumption is considered a fundamental part of the Patriot's Fair. The electrical system also only requires some volunteers and a few days to assemble.

Using this rudimentary system, managed entirely by a small cadre of volunteers, electricity and water are made freely available to all persons gathered at the Patriot's Fair. The Sons of the Republic consider these duties related to the maintenance and establishment of infrastructure and logistics, as the first and most critical activity of any military force. Their doctrine is that martial affairs related to combat and armed struggle typically comprise only a fraction of a percent of total hours served, even by the most hardened veterans of antiquity. The majority of a Military's time and energy is consumed with the construction of roads, bridges, and transportation devices which ensure the steady flow of supplies to an Army. Due to their intensive focus on logistics and supply lines, The Sons of the Republic are noted by military historians to be a unique combination of both a land based militia, and a Naval force. Operating under their own unique charters like a pirate confederation, but doing so as a land power, treating their cities as if they were vessels at sea. These they supply with goods to last a month of siege warfare. This period of time they gather is enough time for them to summon reinforcements and reserves to end any potential conflict over the territories that they control.

The Sons of the Republic also take after the Navy in their reliance on natural forms of energy that they harvest through their peculiar trinkets. Wind, Sun, and moving water all present ample opportunities to harvest energy from nature, and their devices are suitable for harvesting enough for their personal

needs. The Sons of the Republic are also similar to the Navy in that they possess an affinity for the use of rope and wire as a highly portable, lightweight, and practical tool. They all receive training in the tying of useful knots, the operation of advanced pulley systems, and weave their own hammocks which are used for camping in the field. Ziplines are established throughout the entirety of the Patriot's Fair wherever useful or convenient, and it is a common sight to see a black clad Son of the Republic whizzing by overhead, gliding upon the webwork of metal ziplines that make for rapid transportation throughout the camp.

Small agricultural communities also spring up across the Fairgrounds, with small chicken coops producing fresh eggs available for purchase on site, along with fresh milk and cheese produced directly from goats and cattle that are brought to the fair explicitly for this purpose. Beasts of burden are often responsible for the transport of goods into the Patriot's Fair. A Baggage train company manages the transport of goods and sometimes persons between the Patriot's Fair, and the road systems for motor vehicles which do not typically have full access to the remote Fairgrounds. The Sons of the Republic believe that proximity to animals is a fundamental part of traditional American life, and although many urban centers disallow this kind of daily existence, the Sons encourage this lifestyle at the Patriot's Fair, even if only as a vacation, to remind the American populace of their roots and origin. It is also believed that raising children in proximity to animals, and teaching them about the traditional relationships that existed between man and animal, teaches them a more profound connection to nature, and serves to inform them more deeply of their own existential condition as human beings.

Where the law allows it, wild game is also foraged along with edible plants that can be identified in the terrain. This is considered a form of martial exercise by the Sons of the Republic, and the annual rotation of locations allows the membership rolls to learn survival skills in a communal setting that are specific to each geographical region, to be fully prepared for political or natural disasters which could disrupt the flow of ordinary commerce and services. It is typical that the older men do not actually hunt themselves, but accompany the younger men and

assist them in learning the trade of a huntsman. This keeps the populations of the animals in the National Parks abundant, while providing the critical developmental experience of hunting to young men. It is said amongst the Sons of the Republic that a young hunter returning to camp with the elder men in his entourage, and a fresh kill in the baggage train, is the moment that a Son of the Republic transitions from boyhood to manhood.

There is an evening public feast every day, where the successful hunters who provide for the meal are formally honored by the elected heads of the Sons of the Republic. The women who prepare the public meal are also honored likewise. A feast commences, followed by a traditional form of entertainment, a play, musical performance, dance, or recitation of a classical work of literature from one of the veterans amongst the Sons of the Republic. After the entertainment concludes, the young men who contributed to the feast are all gathered by the senior officials, and they march off into the wilderness and do not return until the following morning. It is said that this is the time when a young man chooses whether or not to take the oath of secrecy that accompanies his membership with the Sons of the Republic. If he swears the oath he returns with the elderly men the following morning, and is no longer regarded as a boy. If he refuses, he returns to his mother and father the following morning alone after the elders and "oath keepers" have returned.

The exact details of this ceremony, and what this oath entails, are known only by the Sons of the Republic. All but one detail of this oath is concealed, and that detail is that the Sons of the Republic are ordered to conceal their oath even from their own wives and consorts. Believing that women are prone to gossip by nature, they know that the secret of their order will be revealed if even one woman were to discover it. Thus, any man whose wife is caught sharing information about the fraternity of Sons is to be excommunicated, which to them is a great disgrace. From what I gather, the women gladly accept this arrangement, feeling it better for the men to carry the burden of their oath rather than them. This leaves the women to focus on child rearing and the maintenance of their familial estate.

After taking his oath, a Son of the Republic spends the rest of the Fair amongst the Elders, and discussions ensue into the late hours of the night, to determine where each young man could most expand his capabilities and skills to serve the order of Sons. He is provisioned with free room and board for himself, his wives, and children, for the rest of his life so long as he maintains a 40 hour weekly volunteer service, and good standing with the Sons of the Republic. Although the compounds where the Sons of the Republic live are not open to the general population, what I gather is that they are a mix of ancient buildings scattered across the urban centers of the Nation, as well as rural complexes that resemble medieval castles, and whose locations are so remote, and kept in secret, that there are sparsely existing photographs of the locations. I have also heard rumors that some of their compounds are built underground in the fashion of military bunkers, both to conceal from sight, and from aerial bombardment. These compounds are financed by wealthy benefactors of the Sons, and labor is sourced directly from the organization's members at no cost due to the mandatory 40 hour work week requirement.

Many have equated the Sons of the Republic to the Knights Templar, and it appears that much of their customs and survival strategy are sourced from this ancient institution. The renunciation of private property appears to be a critical component of life among the Sons of the Republic. They freely exchange their property between each other, from housing, to tools, to clothing... But from my observations I have noticed that there is an unspoken system of credit amongst them. If a Son provisions another Son, it is expected that the favor will be returned in some manner at some later date, as a gesture of respect. The critical difference between the Sons and the Knights Templar, is that the Sons take wives, perhaps the only form of property which is not exchangeable amongst them. The women amongst the Sons of the Republic are guarded as closely as their secret oaths. All of them make an agreement amongst themselves to defend the honor of every Wife and Daughter who's male guardian is counted among the Sons of the Republic, whether dead or alive.

Like the Mormons and Saracens, the Sons of the Republic are permitted multiple wives, while the women are only permitted one husband. Although I do not personally know the facts of the matter, I have heard that any woman who is proven to have betrayed her husband is sentenced to death and executed by her husband, and in some extreme cases, all of the children disappear as well. This makes women amongst the Sons of the Republic reluctant for marriage, and extends the courtship phase of male female relations before a formal marriage contract is signed. Once, however, a marriage contract is signed and agreed upon, only death can separate a married couple amongst the Sons of the Republic. This makes their family life extremely orderly and well mannered, with the children produced from these unions developing profound capabilities that far surpass the abilities of their peers.

From Childhood, the Sons of the Republic are raised to be both elite military personnel, and to have engineering expertise that encompasses every domain of material science to at least a moderate or proficient degree. In this way, by the time a Son of the Republic becomes an adult, he can be trained to be an expert in any field at all. The elementary level of training focuses primarily on socialization and the development of the personality. This phase of the education is primarily managed by women who teach the children writing, mathematics, history, etiquette, and the use of tools to accomplish daily household chores. Approaching the pubescent phase, the Sons spend time with their fathers or other male familial relations working as apprentices, learning the trade of their fathers and contributing to the maintenance of the general wealth and prosperity of their order. The young women go on to develop a higher degree of education in the arts, sometimes attending specialized schools, where they study literature, history, music, theater, and dance. The purpose of the feminine education is to develop a broad social and intellectual sense that can be of service to her future husband, as well as a physically pleasing form through exercise and careful attention to nutrition. Boys are also encouraged to engage in the fine arts, but only as a hobby after their volunteer work with their fathers is completed for the day.

Martial training is a mandatory event for all male members of the Sons of the Republic every Sunday. Physical fitness is expected to be maintained as a matter of lifestyle. Participation in physical exercise is mandatory for all males between the ages of 16 and 45, which is the traditional Roman rule of military service. On Sundays, the Sons of the Republic meet at a designated place according to their region for roll call with the other male members of the fraternity. Women are strictly prohibited from attending these gatherings, although they do send off their husbands with various food stuffs that they contribute to a general potlatch to keep themselves sustained throughout the training exercises. The first hour of exercises is typically of a more intense nature, either hand to hand combat skills, or obstacle course training. Following this, the procedures for telecommunications, including code names, privileges of various ranks, etc... are all detailed and discussed. These procedures are constantly being updated by the high command, but changes and modifications must be ratified by the local chapters before they go into effect. This allows a time and opportunity to dispute or amend various changes to operating procedure from the local chapters. Young persons aren't expected to fully comprehend the entire infrastructure of this process, but they are expected to be silent and to pay attention to the conversations so that they can absorb the legal infrastructure through osmosis. At times there will be very little discussion concerning procedure, in such cases medical anatomy, physics, engineering, and other useful topics will be discussed.

Following the formal discussion of procedure, engineering, and medicine; another round of physical exercise, either of obstacle courses or hand to hand combat training begins again. Following this, the group breaks for lunch and leisure, communications to family and friends are permitted at this time. After lunch is target practice. The Sons typically practice with their own arms to ensure proficiency with their primary weapons, but at times will exchange arms with each other to practice with other weapons. Archery and various slingshot devices are considered legitimate weapons for training. Typically, this is how young children are introduced to target practice before they are entrusted with firearms.

Following target practice, the younger members will be brought to a specified location by their fathers, where a war game will be arranged to take place. Here, the children will use toy weapons to practice various practical forms of military exercise. This involves establishing secure perimeters, clearing rooms, protecting valuable persons, assassinating targets, placing effective traps, breaking and entering, target practice, endurance training, and other competitive games that push the young men to compete with each other for status and recognition in the martial profession. In a culture that places no value on material objects outside of weapons and tools, status and recognition serve as a potent aphrodisiac which fosters a competitive spirit amongst these young men. Women and Children are also permitted to attend these games to watch and observe. Amongst the Sons it is believed that the gaze and judgment of women has an effect on male performance that encourages excellence.

Now these training exercises can also be observed at the Patriot's Fair, but at a much larger and grander scale. Each day begins with a series of full scale wars with multiple battalions, chains of commanding officers based on rank, all of whom assemble at sunrise to engage in a series of gamified conflicts which in some cases become so competitive that men are very seriously injured and require immediate medical attention. In some cases, the medical treatment is provided in the field during the game by various players, and if the soldier can maintain full consciousness, he is expected to provide some form of service to the combatants, even if it is only reloading the magazines of his companions or guarding a defensible position.

The types of games played at the Patriot's Fair are elaborate and detailed, occurring over the entirety of the Fairgrounds. Game types are typically chosen at random, through a series of coin tosses, or by blindly drawing from a hat. These game types include those which were common to war simulations of the 21st century, games like 'Capture the Flag', 'Plant the Bomb', 'Territories', 'Team Deathmatch', and the favorite amongst the younger Sons... 'Zombies'. In the

'Zombies' game type, some of the fathers have quite the thespian reputation. After being 'infected' they will run around screaming and terrifying the children creating a marvelous scene. This continues until a majority of the camp is in such a state that the outside observer might think the contestants mad. The children either find great joy and humor in this performance, or become deeply frightened and have to be removed from the scene by their mothers.

Depending upon the territory where the Patriot's Fair is being held in a given year, temporary urban environments are sometimes constructed for these games to facilitate a simulation of urban warfare. At times, the assembled kiosks selling various wares turn into a warzone, and patrons have to duck and dive behind cover to prevent themselves from being hit by flying paintballs or men locked in ferocious hand to hand combat. These war games, which can appear terrifying and hyper real to an outside observer, are in truth very considerate to the trained eye. In order to end a dispute all that is necessary is to "tap out" or to raise one's arms above the head. This signals that you have lost a "life" or "strike".

Each player is allotted 3 strikes, and is expected to be honest about the amount of strikes which they possess and lose through the course of the game. If it is discovered that any Son lied about the amount of "Strikes" they received, they are brought to the assembly before the collective evening meal, and ruthlessly beaten with a sapling by every member in attendance, and stripped of all their ranks. In large gatherings having more than 25,000 men, there are some occasions where men will lose consciousness and develop serious scars. These dishonorable men do retain their membership amongst the Sons, but are disgraced and must return to the state of a new initiate, no longer being entrusted with firearms, and his wife has permission to divorce him without consequence. So far as I know, this procedure has never been enacted because no Son of the Republic would gamble his honor over something as trivial as a game.

Something that is often remarked upon is the sophistication and simplicity of the equipment and gear that every son of the republic is expected to maintain at all times, and have immediate access to. The various tools, weapons, and equipment that are utilized by the Sons of the Republic are called part of their “kit”. Like the Hoplons of ancient Greece, the Sons of the Republic are expected to procure and maintain their kit at their own expense, with overtime hours being made available to early initiates to afford their equipment. Each kit begins with the fundamental code of dress, black steel toe workman’s boots, black triple stitched dungarees (or ‘jeans’ as they are sometimes called), a white t shirt with a customary pocket square, a flannel overshirt or black jean jacket with a hood for colder climes, and the signature black baseball cap with a black leathern belt wrapped about it, an ode to the Pilgrims of the colonial era. Sitting just beneath the iconic hats, are the singular masks of the Sons of the Republic. These masks are custom made for each Son to mimic the likeness of a heroic man that they admire.

These masks are constructed using computers and ballistic plastics that serve as a layer of physical protection, and as a protection of one’s identity. Each Son customizes his mask with various secret symbols that are known only to them, and from what I gather, function in a similar way to Army badges or Prison tattoos, signifying particular accomplishments, and group affiliations. The commanding officers often have rare insignia on their masks that are not seen amongst the general membership amongst the Sons. The mask is seen as a form of immediately accessible expression of one’s philosophical orientation amongst the Sons. A balaclava is worn underneath the mask in case it should be removed accidentally in a public setting, protecting the identity of the Sons. It is believed amongst the Sons that this practice of concealing one’s identity allows for them to more faithfully practice the Spartan virtue of the “Homoi” or, “Ones who are the same”. According to the Sons, this unity of dress with its controlled mechanisms of individual expression; facilitate the development of a strong group consciousness, recognizing fully that the actions of each Son reflects upon the whole of the organization, both internally amongst themselves, and as it concerns the outside world.

Added to these worn elements is a ballistic vest that doubles as a climbing harness, knee and elbow pads, a bowie knife, a handheld Ham Radio, and a chest holster for the famed pistol modeled after the Desert Eagle, called the "Federal Eagle". The Federal Eagle is the capstone piece of every Son's kit, the final item that he acquires in his membership process. The Federal Eagle serves as a status indicator, typically accompanied with an Officer's rank, and serves as a prominently displayed deterrent against violence in the chest holster of these intimidating personages. In rare circumstances, a customary shot into the air is used to initiate ceremonious occasions, or to interrupt Sons who are engaged in a dispute that could lead to violence. Aside from these purposes, the Federal Eagle fulfills its ultimate purpose as a suitable self defense weapon, and in the rarest of circumstances, as the primary means of delivering lawful orders for capital punishment with a high degree of certainty and finality. The role of the Sons as a mercenary corporation for the federal government, does at times bestow this power upon a select few who are amongst them.

After the items worn on the physical person at all times, comes the secondary items of the kit. All items in the kit are expected to be fully functional for a two week period without any access to grid electricity. To fulfill these ends there is one critical component that is added to the kit, designed both for transportation, and to generate electricity regardless of weather conditions, and that is the bicycle. Like the cavalry of antiquity, which used beasts of burden to carry them rapidly over great distances at low cost, and to transport critical infrastructure to the battlefield, the Sons also deploy bicycles with similar intent. The physical nature of bicycle transportation is very similar to horse back riding, and maintains the endurance and physical fitness of the operator. For these reasons, young men are expected not to own motor vehicles, and to use bicycles as their sole means of transportation to physically harden them, to increase their territorial awareness, and to limit their capabilities in such a manner that forces them to rely on and deepen their immediate relationships and associations within the Sons of the Republic.

Fixed to the rear rack of the bicycle is a small power generator with its own gear system that is activated by the push of a button. This disengages the pedals from the Bicycle Wheel, and instead directs the energy into the generator, which itself must be hooked up to a device or battery to store the energy. In this way, the bicycle can be used as a system of transport on its own, or it can be used in a stationary position to transfer the mechanical energy from the legs of the user, into a battery or device. In practice, very few people utilize this device but it is expected to be checked for functionality on a regular basis to ensure that in case of an emergency, it is available. This allows for critical communications technology to receive power in any emergency situation so that the National Headquarters of the Sons of the Republic can distribute orders, and maintain and communicate an assessment of a potential battlefield scenario.

The second item of importance is the Hand Truck and War Chest, which both are designed so that they can be hauled by a bicycle. The Hand Truck has a multi faceted purpose. It is designed as a large ballistic Kevlar Shield that is designed to protect personnel from small munitions in urban combat scenarios. The wheels beneath the heavy device allow it to be transported easily with one arm while maintaining functional control of a firearm. This device can also be used as a gurney for transporting the wounded in battle, or for general purposes of manually transporting heavy objects in close quarters or rough terrain.

The “War Chest” that locks into place on the Hand Truck is also bulletproof, with the addition of a hermetic seal to waterproof the interior. It is generally filled with various electronics, satellite and radio communications devices, an elaborate multi tool device for dealing with all forms of American hardware, lock picks and skeleton keys of many kinds, a Torsion Crossbow with bolts, Munitions of varying calibers, and I would presume some other secret objects which I am myself not privy to. On the outside of the chest are Leather pockets for items of less intrinsic value and more immediate utility, things like clothing, cables, ropes, a medical kit, a hammock, a roman curule folding chair, and other such trinkets. The war chest doubles as both a storage device of physical media, as well as a storage device for

electronic data. Inside each chest is a powerful computer with customized software that is capable of transmitting and receiving data using radio waves. Due to the use of radio as the medium of transmission, operators typically utilize the technological components of their war chests at night, when radio signals can easily bounce off the ionosphere and increase the distance and clarity with which they can be transmitted and received. This leaves their daylight hours open for various forms of manual labor and engagement with the physical world.

The war chests are designed for maximum practicality, and the Sons of the Republic consider their chests as sacred family heirlooms, as the knights of antiquity regarded their weapons, allowing nobody access to it but themselves with an elaborate system of iron keys that are required to gain access to the interior contents. The Sons of the Republic limit their ownership of material possessions to those things which can be carried in their war chests using only a bicycle and standard issue Hand Trucks. The cost of the known quantities in this kit appear to me to be priced near the current value of \$10,000 dollars. Considering the impressive capabilities of this equipment, it is not too steep a cost, and can establish modern living conditions for a man alone in the wilderness for as long as the equipment doesn't break. Such a policy makes the Sons of the Republic uniquely mobile and flexible, capable of adapting to any environment they might find themselves in.

The wives of the Sons however, are in fact permitted a greater degree of accumulated possessions; this is accepted because they are not required to maintain military vigilance and capability. This policy also allows women to entirely own the artistic realm of interior decoration and home making according to her own tastes and sensibilities, influencing the culture and lifestyle facilitated in her home as she likes. The Sons of the Republic believe it is part of the natural instincts of women to collect and gather pleasing and useful materials to express her appreciation for her family, and the bounty of the created world as it was made by the hand of God.

Despite the customary attitude of war-like sternness towards these chests, I have also seen them frequently utilized for entertainment. Just last night, a fabric sheet of many dozens of yards in length and width was stretched taut between two towering pine trees. One of the chests utilized a projection device and produced the frames of "El Cid" starring Charlton Heston. I remembered hearing that the Sons of the Republic have a particular relationship with Nostalgia, and believe that the older a form of entertainment is, the more profound and meaningful it is to engage with it from the present tense and attempt to understand it as it was originally intended. It is to them a great exercise in intellectual capability to understand art from multiple cultures and epochs of history, and the most well decorated veterans among them, are known to be savants of the high arts, and in some cases genius artists and craftsmen in their own right.

As I was admiring this scene thinking it quaint that the Sons of the Republic would show a silent movie in the forest, I suddenly heard from every corner of the forest, the booming sounds of the cinema. Utterly perplexed by this, I got up from my makeshift felled tree seating arrangement, and began to investigate the origin point of these sounds. Sure enough, as I had speculated, a number of open chests, with their operators sitting closely on their folding chairs, were producing the sounds in unison. I thought it to be an apt metaphor for this peculiar culture, who goes into the National forests with nothing, and creates the most extravagant entertainment experience that I have yet beheld in my life. Yet, their demeanor and how they regard it as a normal part of life, is in its own peculiar way, strikingly reasonable and appropriate. As these men produce this wonderful effect by working in unison with each other and with nature, one senses a subtle pride in their demeanor that extends from their ability to create a happy circumstance wherever they may be.

Approaching the last day of the Patriot's Fair a day of silence is observed as the merchants begin packing up their wares and the kiosks begin to be disassembled. From every war chest of the Sons of the Republic is broadcast a singular radio program, that includes recitations of the declaration of

independence, varied selections from the Federalist Papers, Washington's correspondences, and concluding at sunset with Washington's Farewell Address. Following the Farewell Address, and the setting of the sun in the west, a set of newly composed songs created by the Sons of the Republic are played to memorialize the Revolution and the legacy of the Founding Fathers. These songs are selected by an administrative committee from all of the songs produced throughout the previous year by members of the Son of the Republic. Some of these songs are compositions of American Classics, oftentimes with lyrics altered. The most famous of which is the rendition of the popular Irish folk song: "Are you going to Scarborough Fair?" but with some alterations to the lyrics, and titled anew as "Are you going to the Patriot's Fair?". Typically, the series of songs would conclude with this performance, sung by the current presiding Grand Master among the Sons of the Republic.

As the beginning chords of "Are You Going To The Patriot's Fair?" begin, a small barrage of fireworks are set upon the night sky. This provides the backdrop behind the Grand Master as he gives his mighty capstone performance, with all of the Sons of the Republic hoisting their armaments in rhythmic unison, their bellowing voices singing hypnotically along:

*Are ye going to the Patriot's Fair...
Cotton Corn Tobacco and Hemp...
For we are Washington's Bastards and Heirs...
And for his coming we shall be prepared...*

With the increasing intensity of each new verse, the fireworks increase in their frequency and size, coloring the night sky, refracting off of the natural landscape and the faces of the patrons. As I lost myself in the crescendo of light and the reverberations of the musical performance coming from all sides, I found myself then at the conclusion of events at The Patriot's Fair. Knowing that here I myself did witness "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" in action.